

## **HELENA AREA TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COUNCIL (HATAC)**

### **October 21, 2014 Monthly Meeting Minutes Intermountain Board Room, 3240 Dredge Drive, East Entrance 2:30 PM to 4:00 PM**

**Attendance:** Allison Batch (SAVE), Les Clark (MILP), Brian Johnson (United Way/Treasurer), Jaymie Sheldahl (RMDC-Head Start/Secretary), Elizabeth Andrews (HCC District #2/Chair), Sandra Lowry (Area IV Agency on Aging), Jamie Schell (City of East Helena Mayor), David Kack (WTI/MSU), Andy Hunthausen (L&C County Commissioner), Matt Elsaesser (City of Helena Commissioner), Bob Maffit (MILP), Judy Harris (HTAC Member At Large), Trish Sorenson (Interested Citizen), Patrick Sanders (DPHHS), Deborah Swingley (MT Council on DD/Vice-Chair), Steve Larson (HATS), Paul Kindt (PEERS), Kiki Moses (MILP), Kay Larson (Rider's Council), Mary Sherlock (Rider's Council), Bob Allen (HATAC), Ryan Luchau (DPHHS AMDD), Karen Lane (Health Dpt.), Linda Collier, Jerry Hutch (MDB), Vivian Crabtree (MDB), Saundra Lowry (Area Susan Pesta (Westmont),

Conference Phone: Scott Chapman

**Introductions:** Meeting called to order at 2:30 pm and started with introductions. All in attendance signed sign-in sheet. Membership forms were distributed along with hard copies of meeting materials. HATAC Chair Elizabeth Andrews reviewed the primary role of the HATAC as outlined by the Montana Department of Transportation "a TAC is an advisory council that cooperatively assists the lead agency/transit manager in assessing and prioritizing local needs and enhances coordination among community partners, as well as, makes recommendations on transit related issues."

**Approval of Minutes:** Brian Johnson made motion and Paul Kindt seconded to approve September 16, 2014 minutes. Discussion – Commissioner Elsaesser in regards to in-kind discussion change wording to "...lack of trust being shown to the Lead Agency to use funds effectively through the in-kind discussions." Minutes approved as amended.

#### **Executive Committee Report/Recommendations/Action Items:**

- **HITP Grant 2 Action Area Project Progress:** Elizabeth Andrews shared Grant Round 2 activities wrap up November 30. Grant Round 3 funding is

a possibility. Consultants will be in town November 6-7 for City County Joint Work Session grant presentation opportunity, HATS branding workshop, HATAC Coordination Subcommittee meeting and other grant related activities. Updates were given by:

- David Kack (WTI) – transportation inventory and mobility management program/job description for a mobility manager drafted. Working on travel training piece right now. Working on a contract amendment to research best governance model for a regional transit system and to develop a transition plan. Needs to be completed by end of November. Deborah Swingley – On track, amended the WTI contract awaiting signature by MSU Bozeman. Hope to be signed next week. There was extra money in the grant due to in-kind contributions for printing, efficient administration and unused travel budget. L&C County approved to amend the WTI contract under the HIPT Grant 2 in order to allow for the research of a regional governance model.
- Brian Johnson – Needs and discussions keep leaning toward improved HATS system and broader regional transit system/governance structure, thus EC looked into what it would cost have a regional transit system service designed (proposal from Nelson Nygaard attached). Grant Round 2 funds all expended. HATAC Executive Committee has secured \$5,000 commitment from coordinated partner and would need at least another \$4,500 in order to go forward with developing a regional transit plan/cost for what it would look like to go to outside Helena city limits. **Brian Johnson motion: HATAC approve the draft proposal to take the regional concepts developed during HITP Grant Round2 and vet/drill down regional service plan/costs. Seconded by Deborah Swingley.** Discussion - Les Clark asked if this was an HATAC fundraising effort. Steve Larson – will you get back detailed plans for a regional system with figures you can budget on? Brian Johnson – yes to both. Les Clark – What are the boundaries we are talking about? Brian Johnson – Looking at the regional concepts worked up in Grant Round 2 and drill down on plan and costs for proposed regional service. Les Clark – who would be fund raising? Brian Johnson – hoping that partners will come forward to help cover the cost. Executive Committee will also approach coordinated partners for funding assistance. Commissioner Elsaesser – will

report would quantify the demands of regional system? Answer yes, it will outline demands via meetings with key partners along regional corridors, surveys and other tools and costs to meet those demands. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- Elizabeth Andrews (Pro-bono Grant Consultant Coordinator) spoke for Jeanette Blize as Jeanette had to leave early – Jeanette is consultant for Funding and Policy Advocacy Coalition and a Riders' Council formation and One-year Action Plans – making great process in both areas. Action Plans completed and being reviewed by respective HATAC subcommittees.
- Elizabeth again shared draft marketing and communications plan is complete and Selena Barlow has sent that out to HATAC Communications and Marketing Subcommittee for feedback and approval. *All consultants in town November 6 and 7 for City/County Joint Work Session grant presentation opportunity (Thursday, Nov. 6, 4-5 pm in room 326 City County Building) and branding workshop run by Selena Barlow on November 7<sup>th</sup> from 10 -12 at the Chamber of Commerce downstairs Conference Room (all were invited to attend either opportunity).*
- **Lead Agency Budget Memo/Fare Review Project Memo-Jaymie Sheldahl** was asked for update on subcommittee (includes MILP and Riders' Council representatives) recommendation regarding fare review. There is no update at this point. Jaymie Sheldahl will get copy of Lead Agency memo and consultant input out to subcommittee and will get back to HATAC at a future meeting with recommendations.
- **HITP Grant Round 2 Satisfaction Survey:** Survey developed by county distributed during meeting and members asked to complete survey before leaving HATAC meeting today. Elizabeth will send out link to web based survey with meeting notes for input from those not at the meeting or unable to stay and complete the survey.

**Lead Agency Update (HATS) Report/Discussion:** See attached memo and ridership report for details. Up to 282 people signed up for para-transit. Things are going well; getting busses prepared for winter with cable chains, studded tires, each bus has sand and a shovel on board. Elizabeth thanked Steve for all his work and creating memos and getting information out to the HATAC in a timely manner. Elizabeth asked Steve for an update on the Capital Commuter

during the Legislative Session. Steve shared that City in discussion with state of Montana regarding capital commuter route probably running January – April, the time of the Legislative Session. Talking about a continuous shuttle that will pick up people at a parking lot on 9<sup>th</sup> and Roberts, Jorgenson's and the Capital Hill Mall East End and dropping them behind Capital, about a 20 minute loop. Steve has more questions like days it will run and hours and what all they want HATS to do. Elizabeth Andrews asked Steve to keep HATAC in the loop on the project progress and ways HATAC can assist.

### **Coordination Subcommittee Meeting Update/Action Item:**

- Presentation/Discussion - Scott Chapman reviewed the 4 general strategies developed thru the July pre-charrette survey and planning charrete and vetted by the HATAC Coordination Subcommittee over the past few weeks, then focused in on the HATAC Coordination Subcommittees' transit service improvement strategy recommendation for broader HATAC discussion, feedback and consideration (see the following link for HATS Service Improvement memo/map/power point):

[Recommended Local Transit Service Improvement Strategy Memo Nels on Nygaard.docx](#)  
[Proposed Route Map.pdf](#)  
[14\\_1021\\_Local\\_Transit\\_Service\\_Improvement\\_Strategy\\_Recommendation.pptx](#)

- **Les Clark motioned to move HATS Service Improvement Recommendation developed during HITP Grant Round 2 to respective commissioners during upcoming Joint Work Session Grant Round 2 Presentation opportunity. Motion Seconded by Sandra Lowry.** Discussion – Andy Hunthausen agreed it was a good to move forward to Joint Work Session, but most the Commissioners have not been involved at the planning process so Andy suggested the Commissioners get the information before the Work Session so they are not unfamiliar with the Service Improvement Recommendation and any other recommendations at the time of the meeting. Elizabeth suggested an email update with consultant memos and plans from key grant areas. Elizabeth will makes sure Scott and other consultants will get memos/materials ready to go out to respective elected bodies before the Joint Work Session. HATAC Executive Committee and Coordination Committee members will attend the JWS and provide support and comments. Commissioner Elsaesser says the recommendation looks great

and thinks it will be well received and interested to move it forward.  
**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Helena Area Rider's Council Update:**

Trish Sorenson – active to form the Riders' Council, addressed HATAC with update on Riders' Council one year work-plan and requested support from Lead Agency with three things: 1. Add an option for a Rider's Council voicemail box on the HATS phone system that Riders' Council members can check and respond to. Riders' Council member would also like to receive mail in care of the HATS that we will regularly pick up and respond to. 2. Partnering with HATS to place a suggestion box on each of the HATS busses. Riders' Council member will be responsible for collecting rider feedback and responding. 3. Replace the current online HATS Complaint Form with a revised Feedback Form that we have created for you.

**Public Comment:** Commissioner Elsaesser has called for a reduction in travel lanes along Montana Ave from malfunction junction to Cedar St. to allow for safer pedestrian crossings, a 2 lane underpass and better access to Montana Ave. for traffic from the Transit Center within the greater Helena Transportation Plan Update. (Road Diet is the technical term)

**HATAC November Meeting Announcements/Adjourn:** Tuesday November 18 HATAC meeting focus will be presentation from Selena Barlow regarding outcome of branding workshop and Communications and Marketing plan overview/recommendations and starting HATAC FY 2016 Coordinated Plan/budget recommendations process as per HATAC Action Plan timeline.

**Meeting adjourned 4:20pm**

HATAC meetings are the 3rd Tuesday in each month and will begin promptly at 2:30 and run until 4 pm.

As outlined by the Montana Department of Transportation, a TAC is an advisory council that cooperatively assists the lead transit agency manager in assessing and prioritizing local needs, as well as discusses and makes recommendations on various transit related issues.

<http://www.helenamt.gov/public-works/hats/helena-transportation-advisory-council.html>

NOTE\*\* All requests for agenda items must be turned into Elizabeth Andrews no later than the first day of each month 2014. Final agenda and materials will go out a week ahead of monthly meeting. A reminder email will go out the day of the meeting. Meeting will be posted on the city web [www.helenamt.gov/public-works/hats.html](http://www.helenamt.gov/public-works/hats.html). They will also be available in the HATS conference Room in a binder. Meeting materials will be provided. Thank you!

**Regional Service Improvement Support | Nelson Nygaard Proposal  
Helena Area Transportation Advisory Council**

## APPROACH

Building on the development of a local transit service improvement and the other Helena Area Inclusive Transit Planning Grant Project Round 2 activities, this approach defines a framework for developing a detailed regional transit service improvement. The methodology outlined here is a collaborative approach involving support from Nelson\Nygaard (as detailing in the following scope of work) in addition to contributions from the community.

The local service improvement activity resulted in a couple of regional concepts for service to communities outside of the City of Helena. These are basically a set of service strategies that could be put in place to meet the needs for regional travel. Before these can be refined into an implementable regional service improvement, the following issues need to be resolved to help prioritize service and to provide a financially constrained service model:

- Can the demand from the 3 to 5 subregions (e.g. west, north, and east valley) be quantified?
- What is the demand for circulation within each subregion as well as between the subregion and the City of Helena?
- Is there a non-commute element of either intra-subregion or inter-subregion travel demand?
- What coordinating services in the region are available to compliment public transit to meet these needs?
- How will regional service improvements be funded?
  - What financial resources will be available and from what sources?
  - Will these funds be available for region-wide use or targeted to a subregion based on the source?
  - When will these funds be available and how sustainable are they?

This approach proposes that the community engage stakeholders and potential partners in each subregion to address many of these issues. These should be facilitated interactions with these subregional “collaboratives” where the participation will largely come from the Policy and Advocacy Coalition with possible oversight from the HATAC.

The two main activities of these collaboratives will be to:

- Assist in the execution of subregional needs assessment and information gathering surveys; and

- Working within a framework developed by Regional System Governance Model research, identify a level of transit funding that the each subregion can commit to.

# PROPOSED NELSON\NYGAARD SCOPE OF WORK

The following tasks detail the activities Nelson\Nygaard will execute to provide a detailed Helena Area regional service improvement.

## TASK 1 KICKOFF CONFERENCE CALL

Nelson\Nygaard will facilitate a conference call with representatives from all of the subregional collaboratives and the HATAC Coordination Subcommittee to introduce the regional service improvement planning process and to ascertain inputs on the client and employee survey design (Task 2).

## TASK 2 SURVEY DEVELOPMENT AND REPORTING

### **Task 2.1**      *Survey Design*

Using inputs from the kickoff meeting, this subtask will develop online survey instruments to ascertain feedback from individual clients and employees regarding the needs for public transportation within and/or to the various subregions. Based on recommendations from the collaborative representatives, a modified survey instrument may be used to engage corporate and institutional leadership regarding needs and social/financial capacity in the subregions.

### **Task 2.2**      *Survey Reporting*

Nelson\Nygaard will facilitate up to four conference calls with subregion collaboratives to review survey findings and document travel needs in each subregion. During these calls we will also discuss a framework for identifying transit funding commitments which the collaboratives will follow up on subsequent to this subtask.

## TASK 3 REGIONAL SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

### **Task 3.1**      *Service Alternatives*

Based on the funding constraints developed by the collaboratives, Nelson\Nygaard will develop a set of 4 service alternatives to meet regional needs given the available budget for transit service. We will facilitate a conference call with representatives from all of the subregional collaboratives and the HATAC Coordination Subcommittee to review the alternative and discuss an agreed upon approach for a single regional transit service improvement.

### **Task 3.2**      *Recommended Service Improvement*

Based on feedback to the alternatives developed in Task 3.1, Nelson\Nygaard will develop a preferred regional transit service improvement. We will detail the recommended improvement providing conceptual schedules, vehicle and driver schedules, bus stop and other infrastructure requirements, and fare recommendations. We will present a draft service improvement to the HATAC and other interested parties via a conference call. Based on any feedback from the HATAC, we will refine the plan producing a final service improvement.